# EIGHTEENE REASONS

## Propounded to the Soldiers of the Body of the Army, Why they ought to continue the severall Adjutators of their respective Regiments, Troopes, and Companies, for the good of the Army, Parliament and Kingdome.

1. BEcause, their dissolution as yet either in part or in whole, is contrary to the solemne engagement of the Army (founded upon the Pillars of justice, mercy, reason & necessity) read assented unto, and subscribed by a generall Randisvous at New-Market as appeareth from their own expres in their said Engagement (dated *July* 5. 1647.) which runs thus: *We the Officers & Soldiers of the severall Regiments, now met at the generall Randesvous, have subscribed unto the said solemne Engagement, and doe hereby declare, agree, and promise to, with each other; to, and with the Parliament, and Kingdome; as followeth.*

*First, that we shall chearfully & readily disband &c. having first such SATISFACTION and SECURITY in those things as SHALL BEE AGREED unto by a COUNSELL, to consist of those Generall Officers of the Armie (who have concurred with the Armie in the premises) with TWO COMMISSION OFFICERS, and TWO SOULDIERS to be chosen for each Regement, who have concurred and shall concurre with us in the premises, and in this Agreement, and by the Major part of such of them, who shall meet in Councell for that purpose &c.*

*Secondly, that without such satisfaction, and security as afore-said, wee shall, not willingly disband, nor divide, nor suffer our selves to bee disbanded, or divided.*

### *Wherein Observe.*

That you of the Body of the Army together with this Councell (thus and no otherwise constituted) are firmly bound each unto other, severally and conjunctively to maintain & defend, & protect each other both in your Individual and contract capacitys; to wit, the Body naturall, and the Body representive to be a mutuall and safe protection and preservation each to other as much as in each other lyeth till satisfaction and security, as aforesaid: so that the Army is hereby bound, not to suffer it selfe, or its councel, nor the Councell to suffer it selfe or the Army as much as in each other lyeth to be disbanded or divided without *satisfaction and security first in those things as shall be agreed unto by the said Councel*: now as yet there is neither satisfaction nor security concerning the manifold *Representations proposals & desire* of the said councel in behalf of the army King Parliament and Kingdome.

Therefore, by the said *solemne Engagement* (*made severally and jointly to themselves,*



them

*to and with the Parliament and Kingdom*) they are bound to themselves, and have bound themselves to the Parliament and Kindome, not to suffer any disbandment of the Army division or dissolution of themselves or of their councell, either in part or in whole, during the time of dissatisfaction and non-security to such things for the safety of the Army, Parliament and Kingdome as hetherto hath, or shall for the future be agreed unto by the said *councell of Officers and Souldiers*.

And so every Officer, Souldier or person whatsoever which hitherto hath or for the future shall enter himself into the said *solemne Engagement* and become a Member of the Army, is bound not to disband himselfe, dissert or forsake the Army, or to the utmost of his power to suffer the Army or its Councell of Officers and Souldiers to be disbanded, disserted, divided or destroyed, but with his life and his fortunes is bound to preserve, continue and uphold both Army and Councell inuire and firme even if possible to the period of the worke.

And he or they of what quality or condition soever, whether Officer or Soldier, that shall before the said satisfaction & security endeavour the disbandment of the Army either in part or in whole, or shall endeavour the disbandment, division or dissolution of this Counsell either in part or in whole, are falsifiers of their owne solemne Engagement to themselves and one with another to the Parliament and Kingdom; and out of their own mothes even from the Equity of their owne Engagement are to bee adjudged (as indeed they are in so doing) Enemies to the Armie, Parliament and Kingdome.

Now if as some object, it be answered, that the Engagement extenderh only to the prevention of the disbandment or division of the Army, and not of the councell till the said *satisfaction* and *security* without breach of the faith and solemne Engagement of the Army. I reply,

That if it extend to the body of the Army then much more to the Councell: for the good of the Army, (for matter of safety, preservation and union thereof, as also for the peace tranquillity and freedome of Parliament and Kingdome) is precisly wrapt up, and comprised in that Councell as in the head of that Body: so that if the head of it should be cut off, cleft, or the brains of it pashed out how shall the body of the Army retaine its perfect life and being?

Now the Councell (according the Engagement) is (as before was expressed) to consist of those generall Officers of the Army (who have concurred with the Army in the premises) with two Commission Officers and two Soldiers to be chosen out of every Regement, who have concurred or shall concurre in the premises: so that the Councell (according the Armyes Engagement) is not to consist of officers without two Soldiers out of every Regement, or of the Souldiers without the aforesaid officers; but joyntly the said Officers and Souldiers together make up the said councell, or representive Body of the Army, according to the solemne agreement and Engagement of the Army: no other *Councell* whatsoever though under the name and guise of the Army being the *councell of the Armie* for their present expedition (in behalfe of the Army, the Parliament and Kingdome,) it being of a different kinde and nature, of a different Election, Authority Originall and end from that of the councell of warre; and all such not so elected and constituted as aforesaid as shal assume or presume upon the *name* or *authority* of that Councell are *invaders* and *usurpers* and *abusers* of the *name power* and *authority* of the *Armie*; and all their results, actions and transactions under that guise are not the results, actions and transactions of the Army, but are all as concerning the Army illegitimate, irregular, and unjust, contradictory and abusive to the Army.

And hence it is, that this great Councell of the Army so elected and deputed hath

proceeded

proceeded by vertue of their free Election and Deputation in the *name power and authority* of the *Army* to consult, represent and propose all verall things, not only as *Soldiers* for the good and safety of the Army; but as *Commoners*, for the peace, freedome, and liberty of the Kingdome, from time to time, agreed unto by the said trusted counsell of the Army; and so is properly and truly the sence, intent, and mind both of the head and body of the Army, truly undertaken and prosecuted by the just, legitimate, naturall Power, and Right, of the Armie both as Soldiers, and Commoners.

So that it is most evident and plaine, that the *Soldier-Adiutators* as well as the *Officer-Adiutators* have an *undoubted right* in this *counsell*, betrusted and conveyed unto them by the Armie, even in as large a measure both as *Soldiers* and *Commoners*, as the Officers can plead it for themselves; not to be infringed, invaded or destroyed either by the Generall, Officer or Officers whatsoever untill such *satisfaction & security* in & for those things which have or shall be agreed unto joyntly by the said elected Officers and Soldiers for the good of the Armie, the Parliament and Kingdome.

And this right can no more be taken from the *Officer* then from the *Soldier*, and from the *Soldier* no more then from the *Officer*,

1. One reason, power and authority (which may serve as a second reason for the continuance of the Soldier) being for the original & constitution of both, & one reason power & authority for the continuance and termination of both; that which pleads the continuance or removall of the one, pleads the continuance or removall of the other, therfore that Soldier which shall invade, infringe, or destroy the right and power of the Officer, or that Officer which shall invade, infringe or destroy the right and power of the Soldier in the *said Counsell*, is an enemie both to Officer and Soldier, an undermi ner, subverter and confounder of the said *Solemn Ingagement* for the Armie, Parliament and Kingdome, & so undoubtedly an enemie unto all: whatsoever his deluded intention, & suppositalls may be, such and no other are his said actions, and so are the Authors and Actors therof to be adjudged and esteemed, if it be lawfull and safe to judge the tree by its fruit. For he that shall plead for and endeavour the removall of the Soldier out of this Councell, and thereby shall accomplish the same, may when he hath so done by the very same reason endeavour and accomplish the removall of the Officers, both being grounded upon one bottome, and so totally dissolve and consummate this counsell of the Army, and utterly make voide the Ingagement thereof, as also undoe all againe which hath thereby been done, to the utter ruine both of the Army, the Parliament and Kingdome, especially of the honest and godly party therein. So that this power of consultation and proposall, as well in order to themselves, and their respective Regiments, Troops and Companies, whom they present, and to the Parliament and Kingdome, *as Commoners*, as in order to themselves and the Armie *as Soldiers*, being thus radicall and indivisible in the Soldier til such *satisfaction & security* as aforesaid, it may prevent or else give answer to another objection, which is, that the election and function of the *Soldier Adiutators*, was and is only for the Armie *as Soldiers* about the point of disbandment, Indempnity, pay and the like; and further to disprove this objection, and to render the matter voide of all exception, their continued practice, progresse and proceedings joyntly in this counsell, for consultation, proposall and conclusion of things for themselves, the Army and Kingdome as Commoners gives a sufficient and publique testimony to all men.

3. The Body of the Army, by vertue of their owne proper Engagement, have no

*to and with the Parliament and Kingdom*) they are bound to themselves, and have bound themselves to the Parliament and Kindome, not to suffer any disbandment of the Army, division or dissolution of themselves or of their councell, either in parte or in whole, during the time of dissatisfaction and non-security to such things for the safety of the Army, Parliament and Kingdome as hetherto hath, or shall for the future be agreed upon by the said *councell of Officers and Souldiers*.

Also every Officer, Souldier or person whatsoever which hitherto hath or for the future shall enter himself into the said *solemne Engagement* and become a Member of the Army, is bound not to disband himself, dissert or forsake the Army, or to the utmost of his power to suffer the Army or its Councell of Officers and Souldiers to be disbanded, disserted, divided or destroyed, but with his life and his fortunes is bound to preserve, continue and uphold both Army and Councell intire and firme even if possible to the period of the warre.

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power (in being to the said Engagement for the good of the Army, Parliament and Kingdome) to disannull, repeale or destroy the said Councell or Engagement, either in part or in whole till the safety of the Army Parliament and Kingdome, according to your either hath beene, is, or shall be proposed and agreed unto by the said Councell of Officers and Soldiers, for by the generall, joynt and Solemne Agreement of the Army, the body thereof hath firmly obliged and bound it selfe neither to terminate, nor dissolve it self or its Councell, nor suffer it selfe nor its Councell to be terminated, devided, or dissolved *till full accomplishment and such satisfaction and security* as aforesaid, according to the agreement, conclusions results and proposals of the said Councel both for the Army and Kingdom. And if such satisfaction & security as by the said Counsell shall be agreed unto must first be, (as you have ingaged) then it may not, neither are you to divide or dissolve before if such, first and by this counsell and not before, then this counsell is of equall duration with the Army, even to disbandment. For should the Body of the Army or any part thereof recall or attempt to recall their said *Adjutators or Representors* either in part or in whole from their service and function in the said Councel the Body or party in so doing would visibly and palpably destroy and subvert the very essence and being of the said *Solemn Engagement* not only in order and Councell to safety, and take away order and Councell, and safety must needs give place, and ruine succeed. Therefore, all that are of the Body of the Army are firmly bound (as they tender the good of the Army, the Parliament and Kingdom) faithfully and precisely to preserve, defend, protect & continue the said Honourable *Solemn engagement* and *Councell* till the full accomplishment, establishment and security of all things for the good, safety and saftary of the Army, the peace security and freedome of the Parliament and Kingdome, assented or agreed unto, or to be assented or agreed unto by the said Councell conjunctively of Officers and Soldiers.

4. It is no true representation of the Army where the free Elected Representors of the Body are substracted and taken away.

Therefore, the Soldiers which are representors of the severall Regiments, troopes and Companies of the Army neither can nor may, in Being to the Representation it self be disposessed, removed divided or dissolved, for in so doing the Representation would cease, and all would be tumbled into confusion or irrigularity at least.

5. The Soldier is concerned in the safety of the Army both as Soldiers and Commoners, and in the peace safety and freedome of the Parliament and Kingdome equally with, & as deeply even as the Generall Officers themselves; & therfore to be no more ejected then any of the Generall Officers whatsoever out of this Councell, without apparant violation of their Right, and hazard of their safety both as Soldiers and Commoners.

6. In case the Generall Officers should suppresse, make void and dissolve the other Officer & Soldier adjutators, and proceed of themselves in their single Capacity they could no more be termed or accounted this foresaid *Councell of the Army* then the leg or arme of a man without the rest of his members can be termed or accounted the man; neither can that which is but in part be a representor of the whole.

And so they would become only *Representors of themselves* not of the *Body of the Army*, and their actions, proposals and desires not be the Actions proposals and desires of the Army but of themselves.

7. Neither Generall Officers nor other Officers ever had or can have a generall Monopolie of all just Counsell and wisdom, but as ever there hath, so still in the multitude of counsellers there is safety and wisedome, and wisedome as the wise man saith Eccle. 7.19. shall strengthen the wise man more then ten mighty Princes that are in the City.

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8. A Military Commission doth not confer wisedome to the Officer, but it is properly and putely the gift of God, distributed according to his good pleasure: Therefore wisedome in their Councell, is as probably to be expected from the Soldier, as well as from the Officer, and so as much ground to continue the one as the other.

9. It is against the just Nature, and being of any free Councell for any party thereof to usurp over the rest in any wise, or to impropriate or incroach to themselves, the whole power into their hands, to the dispossession or displacing of others.

10. It tendeth to the perversion of the Engagement of the Army from generall safety and peace to the private interests, factious and sinister designes of some few.

11. The Soldier was not only appearing and active in the foundation, prosecution and settlement of the said solemn Engagement, when few or none of the Officers either durst not, or would not, ingage or be seene therein, till the worke was even fitted to their hands.

Therefore, not now to be dispowred by the Army, or in reason, justice or honour to the equity of the said solemne Ingagement, to be slighted or disesteemed by the Officer, but by all honest and just men to be esteemed instruments, to be continued till the accomplishment and perfection of the worke.

12. Their assistance, agitation, and counsell hath hitherto been successefull, faithfull, wholesome and conducent to the good and safety of the Army, prosperous, judicious and upright for the peace, prosperitie, and settlement of the Kingdome, honour of the King, freedom of Parliament and people.

Therefore, there is no reason for their dissolution before satisfaction and security as aforesaid, till they have committed matter of crime worthy thereof.

13. Such as shall so attempt their dissolution before any just desert or reason for the same, and contrary to the Ingagement it selfe, may justly be suspected of some evill intent to their persons, or to the Ingagement it selfe: or else why should their wholesome advice be dispised, or themselves without all desert be cast out of the Counsell? For who knowes, after they are so ejected and dispossessed of all power that through the change of times, and things co-operating with naturall corruption and vanity too subject to places of command and profit, those Soldiers who with great wisedome, hazzard and difficulty, be-

and hitherto with prudence and fidelity, proceeded in the carrying on of the worke, may be cast upon the pikes of distruction, and so left to the mercy of their enemies.

Therefore, no Officer or Soldier that is honest and wise, and simply and faithfully intends and indeavours the good, safety and preservation of the Adjutators, the Army and Kingdome, will not in any wise except against *making sure the safety* of the *Adjutators*, whether Officers or Soldier. And all the world knowes, that there is more probability and certainty of their safety, while they keep the power or staffe in their own hands, till all things be firmly setled and secured for their safety and peace, then when they are dispowred, and the staffe in the hands of another before the said covenanted satisfaction and security. And who knowes what a day may bring forth? therefore it is good to make sure of the worst.

14. The best pretence may be suspected, but where no manner of good is or can be pretended or proposed, there evill of necessity must be concluded; but there is no manner of good to the Armie, to the Adjutators, or to the Kingdome pretended, or can be pretended or propoted for the dissolution of those faithfull Adjutators. For what good can be intended to the Army. Adjutators, or their solemn Engagement, by impairing, distroying and dismembring the lively usefull members of the body of this Counsell? Therefore evill must needs be intended and concluded, in the designe; and from whence it comes, I leave that to the judgement of the diligent and wise observator.

15. It is a great disparagement and dishonour to those Adjutators that now after the heat of the day, and their toylesome and faithfull endurance thereof, they should not be esteemed as worthy to continue and helpe to carrie on the worke to a period, as well as to undertake and begin, or as such as at the beginning thereof either durst not, or would not appeare in the undertaking, countenance, or management of the worke.

16. The Soldiers are more knowing of the mind of their severall Regiments, Troops and Companies, then the generall Officers probably can be; for they are more conversant, free and familiar one with another, then with their head Officers, and can unto them (as unto their Peers and Equalls) more freely communicate their minds, and deliver the sence of the Countries gathered from their severall quarters all over the Kingdome: So that no sort of people can be more experimentally

mentally knowing of the severall oppressions, grievances and necessities of the people in generall then themselves.

Therefore there is as little, if not lesse reason to dissolve or devide the Soldier from this Counsell, as the Officer therefrom.

17. It is a limitation of the wisedome of the Armie, which God in a wonderfull manner hath dispersed and conveyed through the Body thereof; yet, an absolute *stoppage* to the inlets and influence thereof upon its Counsells; For the Adjutators of the severall Regiments, Troops, and Companies, are as the *Caudales pipes* from the severall parts of the body of the Army, or as meet instruments at all times and occasions, as all straights and necessities for communication and conveyance of the wisedome thereof, for the safety of the Armie, the Parliament and Kingdome: And on the contrary, a contrary effect must be concluded: if the whole body of the Army were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? but now in their wise and regular proportion, they are many members, yet but one body: And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor againe the head to the feet, I have no need of you: Nay, much more those Members of the body which seeme to be more feeble are necessary.

Therefore, I hope it will be the industry of every wise and judicious person that minds the safety of that body, and the prevention of Seisme, imperfection or lamenesse therein, to preserve it intire and safe in all its members accordingly, as wherewithall it hath pleased God to indow it.

18. The Dissolution of the Adjutators of the severall Regiments, Troops and Companies, will necessitate and reduce the Armie to a blind ignorant, and implicite faith, even in that worke wherein their very lives and liberties doth consist, and which hath been begun, and hitherto continued, and must be continued in the name of the Armie: which kind of blind course in such a matter wherein most light is required, will to the knowing and judicious persons of the Armie be so offensive and burthensome, and so fill them with feares and jealousies over those which lead them hood wink'd, that they will never be able to beare it, neither indeed ought they to beare it, the which will be so extreamly dangerous to the unity of the body, that nothing but discord, heart-burnings, repinings, distraction and mutiny may justly be expected thereby: For persons who have their sight, and injoy the light, can-

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that endute to be led as if they were blind over hedge and ditch at the pleasure of their leader, or to be made a nose of wax, or hurried hither or thither, so this or that, they know not whether or to what, action must needs be if those their meet instruments of mutuall communication of the mind of the one and proceedings of the other be taken away.

Lastly, All that I shall say to you of the body of the Armie concerning this new enterprize of recalling and suppressing the Adjutators is this, Let reason goe before every enterprise, and counsell before every action. *Eccles.* 37. 16. And so I shall referre my reasons and advice to be pondered before you proceed to the action, and remaine,

Your Cordiall friend and
Newgate August servant.
13. 1647. Richard Overton.